

A STUDY OF AWARENESS OF TEACHER TRAINEES TOWARDS HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

*Dr. Inderjit Kaur

**Ms. Harpreet Kaur

Abstract

The concept of human rights is as old as mankind. This concept is based on the assumption that all human beings are born equal in dignity and rights. These are the moral claims which are inalienable and inherent in all human individuals by virtue of their humanity alone. These are necessary to ensure the dignity of every person so that he is fully able to develop and use his abilities and talents irrespective of their race, religion, nationality, language, sex or any other factor. This paper analyzes the awareness of teacher trainees towards Human Rights education. The data was collected from 600 teacher trainees of different colleges of Punjab. The data was analyzed and results showed that teacher trainees had poor awareness towards Human Rights Education.

Key Words- Human Rights, Human Rights Education, Awareness, Teacher trainees.

'The Rights of everyman are diminished when the Rights of one man are threatened.' *John F. Kennedy*
In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was endorsed by the United Nations as an international war to uphold the rights and freedoms of all human beings. The declaration not only reaffirmed the vital role of civil and political rights of human beings but it also articulated a range of economic, social and cultural rights to which all human beings are entitled. Now there is a universal concern within the world community about contribution of human rights education in ensuring the protection and realization of human rights. Over the past fifty years global events and people's experiences have given the quest for ensuring peace through human rights awareness and education a major thrust. Since 1948, the field of human rights has been elaborated and implemented in substantive detail through many instruments known as covenants, conventions, declarations and International documents on human rights education. During the 50th commemoration of Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1998, there was wide consensus in official circles as well as non-governmental movements worldwide on three issues:-First, the declaration and subsequent

covenants have laid foundations for the promotion and upliftment of human rights in all levels of life. Secondly, despite significant progress in protecting human rights there is still a wide gap between theory and practice in upholding the rights and freedoms of billions of human beings in the world. The third issue highlights the role of education in theory and practice of human rights after five decades of Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The present world is full of violence, communal clashes, ethnic conflict and threat to life, liberty and property. Denial of human rights and human rights violations happen in all areas of social living- economic, cultural and education etc. In this kind of scenario awareness about Human Rights becomes all the more important for all the human beings and especially for the coming generations. For a development in their attitude and for protection of human rights, the people must be helped to get an awareness about their rights. Hence the process of educating the people should begin from the school itself. There is no doubt that the level of awareness and sensitivity towards Human Rights in our country is very poor. Ignorance of the people in this regard has often resulted in their sufferings. Butler Act of 1944 in UK had a nice

*Prof., Govt College of Education, Patiala

**Asst.Prof., MSKKGCOE, Dhamomajra

line written on top, "What our schools are, the race shall be; it is but natural to have great expectations from the classrooms." Every year 10th December is celebrated as Human Rights Day so that an awareness about Human Rights can be created. The young minds need enlightenment rather than intellectual information about Human Rights. The daily reports in the newspapers about the violations of child's rights in schools, child abuse by teachers reveal the fact that attitude of teachers towards human rights education is not favourable. The effectiveness of human rights education at school level can only be achieved in a sustainable manner if we create trained manpower in order to disseminate Human Rights Education. Moreover in order to introduce Human Rights Education in the curricula at all levels of the school we will first have to educate our teachers so that they can efficiently educate their students later on. Some states in India have already included Human Rights Education in their B.Ed course. But NCTE should ensure that it is a part of the curriculum of B.Ed and primary teacher training course all over the country. It is also essentially important that we should have an appropriate model of human rights leading to address each issue of concern and such models need to be imbibed in teacher training programs, besides its inclusion in other professional degree programmes leading to B.Ed, M.Ed etc. At present there is very little human rights education in practice at school level and that too since a handful of years before. The teachers relate to administrators, parents, community members, to teachers, other staff and students. In relationship with students, teachers are clearly superordinate. The recognition of the power of the teacher is the predominant feature of the relationship between the teacher and the student. Henry Adams says, "A teacher effects eternity, no one can tell where his/her influence stops." The teacher plays the roles of diagnostician and prognostician of student behaviour, planner, initiator and supervisor of classroom learning activities, evaluation, model, counsellor & guide. Even before we embark on Human Rights Education, the teachers should know the rights of children and respect them. As teachers, it is not just what we

teach matters, but it is also what we do matters. Equality, the principle that the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration in actions concerning children, respect for the views of the child are the general principles of the convention on the Rights of a child.

Education is a human right and essential for realization of all other human rights. It is a basic right which helps the individual to live with human dignity. Education develops the manpower for different levels of the economy. According to UNESCO data largest number of illiterate people of world are in India. The number of child labour in India is the highest in the world and most important reason for this is the prevailing illiteracy among the vast majority of Indian population. The primary role of education is to empower the child through a liberalize process. Right to Education (RTE), 2009 has finally become a fundamental right for children from 6 to 14 years to receive free and compulsory education. The aim of compulsory education and right to education is to protect children's right to education because children have no way of asserting that right for themselves when through neglect or ignorance, no attention is paid to this need.

Teachers are believed to be the architect of the future. They have to teach millions of students, so they must be aware about the developments in the field of Human Rights Education, So this research is important to know the prospective teachers awareness about the Human Rights Education, Only if the teachers are aware about Human Rights and possess a positive attitude about Human Rights, Only then they can create awareness about these rights in the coming generations. So it is important to obtain an accurate picture of teacher trainee's towards Human Rights Education.

OBJECTIVES

- To assess the awareness level of teacher trainees about Human Rights Education.
- To find out the difference in the awareness of teacher trainees in terms of their gender.
- To find out the difference in the awareness of teacher trainees in terms of their location.
- To find out the difference in the awareness of

teacher trainees in terms of their educational stream.

- To find out the difference in the awareness of teacher trainees in terms of their educational qualification.
- To find out the difference in the awareness of teacher trainees in terms of their residential background.

METHOD

SAMPLE

Population for present study is Teacher Trainees. 600 Teacher Trainees were selected through cluster sampling technique.

MEASURES

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Showing the Test of Normality i.e. Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test

Variable	Statistics	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	
		df	Sig.
Awareness	.035	600	.074

Table 1 shows the values of Test of Normality of all variables for the total sample of Teacher Trainees (N=600) which reveals that the significant values of Kilmogorov- Smirnov test for the variable of awareness, attitude and self –efficacy are .074, for the total sample which is more than 0.05 value. So, the data is said to be normally distributed and parametric tests can be used for analysis purpose.

Table 2: Classification of Teacher Trainees and Descriptive Statistics of each Class

	N	%age	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Z Score	SD of Z scores
Extremely High	18	3.0	92.22	4.61	2.57	0.42
High	32	5.3	80.38	2.28	1.49	0.21
Above Average	140	23.3	73.15	2.24	0.84	0.20
Average	218	36.3	64.02	3.15	0.01	0.29
Below Average	134	22.3	54.51	2.23	-0.86	0.20
Low	50	8.3	47.22	2.24	-1.52	0.20
Extremely Low	8	1.3	34.75	7.98	-2.66	0.73

Table 2 shows that only 18 (3%) teacher trainees had very high level of awareness level of human rights, with average awareness score of 92.22 (SD= 4.61) and average standardized score of 2.57 (SD= 0.42). Another 32 (5.3%) of teacher trainees were classified as high level of human rights awareness with average awareness score of 80.38 (SD= 2.28) and average standardized score of 1.49 (SD= 0.21). Significant number of trainees were classified as above average awareness score (140, 23.3%), with average awareness score of 73.15 (SD= 2.24) and average z-score of 0.84 (SD= 0.20). Majority of the trainees had average level of awareness (218, 36.3%), with average awareness score of 64.02 (SD= 3.15) and average z-score of 0.01. Also, significant proportion of trainees had below average awareness level (134, 22.3%), with average mean score of 54.51 (SD= 2.23) and average z-score of -0.86 (SD= .20). 8.3% of respondents had low score and 1% of trainees had extremely low score (refer

table 2). Overall, around 68% of teacher trainees possessed average or above average level of awareness about human rights. 32 % of teacher trainees had poor awareness about human rights. From the above analysis, it may be concluded that 36.3% of teacher trainees had average, 23.3% of teacher trainees had above average awareness, 5.3% had high awareness and 3% had extremely high awareness about the human rights. 22.3% of teacher trainees had below average, 8.3% of teacher trainees had low and 1.3% of teacher trainees had extremely low awareness about human rights. Therefore our Hypothesis, “The awareness of teacher trainees towards Human Rights Education will not be adequate” stands accepted. This is in tune with Stockmann's (2010) study on “Teachers Views of Human Rights Education”. She reported that 47% of the teachers said that this was the first time that they had heard or read about Human Rights Education. This shows the lack of awareness

about human rights in them. Akiri in (2013) also indicated that there is a limited awareness of the fundamental rights amongst secondary school students and teachers. The study recommended that state should seek to promote fundamental

human rights awareness consciously by making the study of subjects which contain elements of the constitution as core, especially for those in primary and secondary level of education.

Table 3: Comparison of mean scores of awareness level of Male and Female

Gender		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T
Awareness Level of Teacher Trainees towards human right education	Male	31	62.90	11.80	-.548
	Female	569	64.01	10.95	

*** Significant at 0.01 level; ** Significant at 0.05 level; * Significant at 0.10 level

Table 3 exhibits the results of independent sample t-test, comparing the average awareness score of male and female teacher trainees. The average awareness level of males (62.90, SD= 11.80) was not significantly different from the average awareness score of females (64.01, SD= 10.95), as t-statistics= -0.548, p= 0.584, was not significant. Although, the average awareness level of female teacher trainees was higher than their male counterpart, but the

differences were not significant. Therefore, it may be concluded that the awareness level did not vary with gender of the teacher trainees or awareness level toward human right education was independent of gender (refer table 3). So our Hypotheses, "There exists no significant difference in awareness of teacher trainees due to variation in their gender." Stands accepted.

Table 4: Comparison of mean scores of Awareness Level of Respondents from Urban and Rural Institutes

Location of the Institute		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t
Awareness Level of Teacher Trainees towards human right education	Urban	360	65.41	10.47	2.173**
	Rural	240	63.42	11.73	

*** Significant at 0.01 level; ** Significant at 0.05 level; * Significant at 0.10 level

Table 4 shows that the average awareness level of teacher trainees from the institutes located in urban areas (65.41, SD= 10.47) was significantly higher than the average awareness score of teacher trainees from the institutes located in rural areas (63.42, SD= 11.73), as t-statistics= 2.173, p= 0.03, was significant (p<.05) (refer table 4). The average awareness level of teacher trainees from the

institutes of urban areas was significantly higher than the institutes of rural areas. Thus it may be concluded that the awareness towards human rights education is affected by the location of the institute. Therefore our Hypotheses, "There exists no significant difference in awareness of teacher trainees due to variation in location" Stands rejected.

Table 5: Comparison of mean scores of Awareness Level of Respondents with Urban and Rural Background

Background of Teacher Trainee		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t
Awareness Level of Teacher Trainees towards human right education	Urban	300	65.09	11.93	2.24**
	Rural	283	63.06	9.87	

*** Significant at 0.01 level; ** Significant at 0.05 level; * Significant at 0.10 level

Table 5 shows that the average awareness level of teacher trainees with urban background (65.09, SD= 11.93) was significantly higher than the average awareness score of teacher trainees with rural

background (63.06, SD= 9.87), as t-statistics= 2.24, p= 0.025, was significant (p<.05). The average awareness level of teacher trainees' urban background was significantly higher than the

teacher trainees with rural background (refer table 5). Thus it may be concluded that the awareness towards human rights education is affected by the background of the individual. So our Hypotheses 4,

"There exists no significant difference in awareness of teacher trainees due to variation in their residential background" stands rejected.

Table 6: Comparison of mean scores of Awareness Level of Graduate and Post Graduate Student

Qualification		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T
Awareness Level of Teacher Trainees towards human right education	Graduation	426	63.23	10.49	-2.54**
	Post-graduation	174	65.73	11.97	

*** Significant at 0.01 level; ** Significant at 0.05 level; * Significant at 0.10 level

Table 6 shows that the average awareness level of teacher trainees with educational qualification of graduation or equivalent (63.23, SD= 10.49) was significantly lower than the average awareness score of teacher trainees with post-graduation qualification (65.73, SD= 11.97), as t-statistics= -2.54, $p = 0.011$, was significant ($p < 0.05$). Thus it may be concluded that the education level affects the

awareness level towards human rights education (refer table 6). As education increased from graduation (or equivalent) to post-graduation (or equivalent), the awareness level of teacher trainees also increased significantly. So our Hypotheses 5, *"There exists no significant difference in awareness due to variation in their educational qualification."* Stands rejected.

Table 7: Results of ANOVA test Comparing the Mean Awareness Score of Three Streams of Teacher Trainees

Stream of Education	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F
Arts	420	62.40	10.30	16.093***
Science	157	67.10	11.40	
Commerce	23	70.96	13.39	

*** Significant at 0.01 level; ** Significant at 0.05 level; * Significant at 0.10 level

Table 7 exhibits the results of one way ANOVA, comparing the average awareness score of teacher trainees with respect to their stream. Teacher trainees were found to have three streams i.e. Arts (N= 420), Science (N= 157) and Commerce (N= 23). The mean awareness level of teacher trainees with commerce stream was highest among three (70.96, SD= 13.39), followed by Science (67.10, SD= 11.40), and Arts (62.40, SD= 10.30). The F-statistics= 16.093, $p = 0.000$, was found to be highly significant ($p < 0.01$) suggesting that at least one of the group was significantly different from others. Data exhibits the stream wise awareness level of teacher trainees towards human rights education. As it can be seen that the mean awareness level of Arts group was lowest and Commerce group was highest. The mean awareness level of Science group was in between the two extreme groups, but it was closer to the commerce group than Arts group. So our

Hypotheses, *"There exists no significant difference in awareness of teacher trainees due to variation in their educational stream"*. Stands rejected.

CONCLUSION

Thus it may be concluded from the above discussion that teacher trainees possess low awareness towards Human Rights Education. Teachers are believed to be the architect of the future. They have to teach millions of students, so they must be aware about the developments in the field of Human Rights Education. Only if the teachers are aware about Human Rights and possess a positive attitude about Human Rights, Only then they can create awareness about these rights in the coming generations.

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